Business Plan

2017–2018

Office of the Premier and Executive Council Office

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Budget 2017–2018: Business Plans

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Office of the Premier / Executive Council Office Business Plan 2017-2018

Message from the Minister

I am pleased to present the Business Plan for the 2017-2018 fiscal year for the Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office.

The Executive Council Office (ECO) acts as a secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet), and serves and supports it and its committees. It aims to ensure the business of Executive Council and its committees is conducted in a timely, efficient manner.

ECO provides non-partisan advice and information to the Premier, Cabinet and its committees; administers government's decision-making process; develops and advances corporate priorities and plans; and provides advice and support on the governance of, and appointments to, agencies, boards and commissions. It also provides administrative and operational support, including human resources and budgeting, to the Office of the Premier.

In 2017/2018, ECO will continue to support the implementation of government's priority objectives, as well as ensure the Province is on track to successfully achieve its stated initiatives. The goals set by The Nova Scotia Commission on Building Our New Economy, intended to help our province achieve its economic and demographic potential, will remain at the forefront. New and Better Ways, an Innovation Strategy for Nova Scotia, will also guide and inform future policy direction.

Original signed by

The Honourable Stephen McNeil
Premier of Nova Scotia
President of the Executive Council

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Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office (ECO) Business Plan 2017-2018

Section 1 – Mandate

The Executive Council Office (ECO) is the permanent non-partisan secretariat to the Executive Council (Cabinet) and its Committees and is non-departmental in function and purpose.

ECO supports the Executive Council in developing and advancing the priorities of government, is responsible for aligning and coordinating government departments in the execution of key priorities of government and provides advice and support regarding the governance of and appointments to agencies, boards and commissions.

Through corporate leadership in policy formulation, ECO provides and coordinates policy advice, works to increase and align policy capacity across government and aims to ensure that the business of Executive Council and its Committees is conducted in a timely and efficient manner.

In close collaboration with the Department of Finance and Treasury Board (FTB), ECO executes Government's mandate by providing planning and strategic policy advice to the Executive Council and its Committees and works with departments to ensure objectives are clear, resources are appropriately allocated, government initiatives are cost effective and consistent with government's plans, that government's priority initiatives are implemented effectively and are communicated accurately.

ECO provides administrative and operational support, such as human resources and budgeting, for the Office of the Premier.

Section 2 – Government Priorities

ECO assists in the continued evolution and refinement of government priorities and works to establish alignment among the departments and agencies through corporate leadership for planning, policy, resource management and informed decision support for the Executive Council and its Committees.

Section 3 – Core Responsibilities/Services

Overall Outcomes

Informed decision making by Executive Council and its Committees is fully supported.

Government priorities are advanced and core responsibilities are fulfilled through leadership in planning, policy development/alignment and resource management across government.

Core Services/ Activities

Leadership, co-ordination and collaboration with Departments.

- Advance Government's policy agenda and priorities.
- Measure and regularly report on the progress of specified priority areas as identified by the Premier and Executive Council
- Provide policy support and coordination to ensure departmental initiatives align with government priorities.
- Support departments in creating and strengthening connections with agencies and other departments.
- Manage and coordinate transition from planning to implementation.

Support of Executive Council and its Committees

- Provide effective and efficient support to Executive Council and its Committees through preparation of relevant, timely, thorough and effective analysis, advice and decision support.
- Ensure effective tracking and timely and clear communication of the decisions and directions of Executive Council and its Committees.
- Identify potential opportunities to improve information and documentation processes for greater effectiveness and efficiency in submission process and content.
- Provide effective policy development and guidance on governance requirements.
- Review and analyze client survey results for improvements and enhancements.
- Ensure corporate functions and services are well planned, serviced and functional.
- Monitor and modify e-Cabinet process.
- Enhance and deploy central guidance mechanisms such as the corporate administrative manuals.

Administrative and Operational Support for the Office of the Premier

- Provide effective and efficient administrative support to the Office of the Premier overseeing human resource requirements, finance and budgeting and operational support such as security and business continuity.

Inputs

Performance Measures

Performance of ECO is measured by client satisfaction.

Plans and progress updates are tangible outputs. Client satisfaction is determined through annual surveys and speak to the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of services and support provided by the Office.

During 2015/16 the Office was restructured in response to both the changing needs of government and to the feedback provided by clients in previous surveys. While it is likely new questions will be added to the survey, the following provides an indication of what may be measured.

Topic (% Agreement by year)	2013/14 Actuals (%)	2014/15 Actuals (%)	2015/16 Actuals (%)	2016-2017 goal (%)
Overall Survey Response (of 300)	30	26	31.5	60
Usefulness of the submissions guide in preparing submissions to Cabinet.		72	82	85
Helpful & timely advice regarding submissions to Executive Council and its Committees	91	90	81	85
Helpful & timely guidance re content of submissions	84	78	91	95
Clear communication of gov't goals & priorities		79	78	85
Coordination of policy agendas across departments		40	50	75
Supports development and implementation of government core priorities		57	67	75

Budget Context

Departmental Expenses Summary
($ thousands)

Programs and Services	2016-2017 Estimate	2016-2017 Forecast	2017-2018 Estimate
Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office	5,500	5,000	5,200
Total - Departmental Expenses	5,500	5,000	5,200
Ordinary Recoveries	--	--	--
Funded Staff (# of FTEs)			
Office of the Premier/Executive Council Office	44	44	41

Note:
For Ordinary Revenues, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 2
For TCA Purchase Requirements, see Estimates and Supplementary Detail Book, Chapter 1

Explanation and Calculation of Performance Measures

The Office measures performance with respect to its Core Business Areas through targeted client survey and feedback mechanisms. The survey is targeted to clients best situated to assess the effectiveness of the particular Core Business Area performance. It is important to note that the survey will address the effectiveness and quality of service and delivery not necessarily whether clients were appreciative of the decisions or results. The survey for 2016/17 should be completed before June 30, 2017.

A range of questions will be used to measure the qualitative side of performance. However, many of the survey questions will typically offer a continuum of responses:

1 Strongly Disagree
2 Disagree
3 Neutral
4 Agree
5 Strongly Agree
6 Not applicable or No experience with which to comment

Responses in the sixth category, "not applicable" are excluded from the results measures.